

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1 - 11. (Cancelled).

12. (Original) An apparatus for performing a hydroforming operation comprising:

- a stationary base;
- a ram linearly displaceable relative to the base;
- a first platen secured to the ram for displacement with the ram;
- a second platen located between the base and the ram, having an opening extending through a thickness of the second platen;
- a first die supported on the first platen and the second platen;
- a second die supported on the second platen and the base; and
- a pin secured to the first platen, including a shank extending from the first platen through the opening on the second platen, and a head secured to the shank, located at an opposite side of the second platen from the location of the first platen, and adapted to engage the second platen.

13. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the base has an opening sized to receive the head therein and to guide displacement of the head relative to the base.

14. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the second platen has an opening sized to receive the shank therein and to guide displacement of the shank relative to the second platen without engaging the second platen.

15. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the shank has a predetermined length extending between the first platen and the head, the length corresponding to a distance in which the first die opens.

16. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the displacing means includes:

a linear actuator engaged with the ram and the platen, adapted to transmit to the platen displacement of the ram relative to the base.

17. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the displacing means includes:

a linear extendable and retractable actuator engaged with the ram and the platen, ~~adapted to produce a force tending to displace the platen relative to the base.~~

18. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the displacing means includes:

a linearly extendable and retractable actuator engaged with the base and the platen, ~~adapted to produce a force tending to displace the platen relative to the base.~~

19. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the first die and the second die each include a pair of die sections having respective recesses formed therein that cooperate to define a die cavity when said die sections engage one another, said die cavities adapted to receive respective workpieces therein; and

further including means for supplying pressurized fluid within each of said die cavities, the pressurized fluid adapted to expand the workpieces into conformance with the respective die cavities.

20. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the first die includes first and second die sections and the second die includes first and second die sections.

21. (Original) The apparatus of claim 20, wherein said first die section of said first die is engaged by the first platen, and the second die section of said second die is engaged by said the base.

22. (Original) The apparatus of claim 20, wherein said first die section of said first die is engaged by the first platen, the second die section of said first die is engaged with the first die section of the second die, and the second die section of the second die is engaged with the base.

23. (Original) The apparatus defined in claim 20, wherein the second die section of said first die and said first die section of said second die are supported on the second platen.

24. (Original) The apparatus defined in claim 20, wherein said second die section of said first die and said first die section of the second die are formed integrally with one another.

25 - 28. (Cancelled).

29. (New) An apparatus for performing a hydroforming operation comprising:
a base platen adapted to support a first section of a first die thereon;
a ram platen adapted to support a first section of a second die thereon, said ram platen being movable relative to said base platen between a closed position and an opened position;

an intermediate platen located between said base platen and said ram platen and adapted to support a second section of the first die and a second section of the second die thereon, said intermediate platen being movable relative to said base platen between a closed position and an opened position and being movable relative to said ram platen between a closed position and an opened position; and

a structure extending between said intermediate platen and one of said base platen and said ram platen to move said intermediate platen to said opened positions relative to said base platen and said ram platen when said ram platen is moved to said opened position.

30. (New) The apparatus defined in Claim 29 wherein said structure extends between said intermediate platen and said base platen.

31. (New) The apparatus defined in Claim 30 wherein said structure includes an actuator for moving said intermediate platen to said opened position relative to said base platen when said ram platen is moved to said opened position.

32. (New) The apparatus defined in Claim 30 wherein said structure moves said intermediate platen to said opened position relative to said base platen after said ram platen has been moved to said opened position relative to said base platen.

33. (New) The apparatus defined in Claim 31 wherein said actuator is a linear actuator.

34. (New) The apparatus defined in Claim 29 wherein said structure extends between said intermediate platen and said ram platen.

35. (New) The apparatus defined in Claim 34 wherein said structure includes a pin for moving said intermediate platen to said opened position relative to said base platen when said ram platen is moved to said opened position.

36. (New) The apparatus defined in Claim 35 wherein said pin is secured to said ram platen for movement therewith.

37. (New) The apparatus defined in Claim 36 wherein said pin moves said intermediate platen only after said ram platen has moved by a predetermined amount.

38. (New) The apparatus defined in Claim 37 wherein said pin includes structure includes a shank portion that extends through an opening formed through said intermediate platen and an enlarged head portion.

39. (New) The apparatus defined in Claim 29 wherein said structure includes a plurality of pins for moving said intermediate platen to said opened position relative to said base platen when said ram platen is moved to said opened position.

40. (New) The apparatus defined in Claim 29 wherein said structure includes an actuator for moving said intermediate platen to said opened position relative to said base platen when said ram platen is moved to said opened position.

41. (New) The apparatus defined in Claim 40 wherein said actuator is secured to said ram platen for movement therewith.

42. (New) The apparatus defined in Claim 41 wherein said structure further includes a pin for positioning said intermediate platen in said opened position relative to said base platen when said ram platen is moved to said opened position.